The Corporation of The City of London
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of London 2008 Budget Review Process

The draft 2008 City of London Budget (Operating and Capital) was presented to the Board of Control this morning.

The net tax-supported budget has been submitted at 4.4 per cent - slightly lower than the target set this past spring. This is before application of assessment growth estimated at 1.5 per cent. Council can choose to lower the rate or fund new/enhanced programs.

"We have a very tough budget process ahead of us," said Tom Gosnell, Deputy Mayor and Budget Chief. "There are significant community needs to be met on the one hand, and we have a responsibility to the taxpayers to keep tax increases as close to the rate of inflation as possible on the other."

The City is experiencing continued movement in securing a "new municipal deal" with the provincial government that has seen announcements for the upload of the Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Drug Benefit Program that will take place over the next few years.

"For the 30th year in a row, the City of London has maintained its Aaa credit rating from Moody's Investor Service, which shows the City's financial plan is succeeding," said Gosnell. "We need to stay the course; work with senior levels of Government to deal with the downloaded program issues; deliver efficient services that are valued by Londoners; and continue to respond to the community's call for affordable taxes."

Highlights

- Lower than average residential, commercial, and industrial property taxes compared with many Ontario municipalities, based on an external study
- Prior debt reduction strategies to reduce debt levels and debt servicing costs are being realized in this budget
- Retained Aaa credit rating from Moody's for 30th year in a row.
- Investing more in maintaining existing infrastructure.
- Residential property tax levy increase of $98 dollars for average Londoner in 2008.

A public participation session at City Hall has been scheduled for January 8, 2008. Public feedback will also be solicited at London's major shopping malls on January 10th.

Complete 2008 budget information is available to Londoners on the City website at www.london.ca.